

CHAPTER 2 ALTERNATIVES

This chapter describes the Proposed Action and alternatives considered to fulfill the purpose and need for designation of vehicle access within the NEMO Routes planning area. This chapter presents and discusses the Proposed Action and alternatives considered. Alternatives considered but eliminated from detailed study are described in Chapter 1.

The approved decision will ultimately amend the CDCA Plan related to general public access by means of motor vehicles in the NEMO Routes planning area. Routes of travel in critical desert tortoise habitat were previously designated in the NEMO Plan Amendment Record of Decision (BLM 2002b)

2.1 Route Designation

Three key concepts are critical to understanding route designations, the alternatives, and the scope of a decision: 1) the definitions of Open, Closed and Limited routes, 2) casual use versus authorized use, and 3) access rights.

2.1.1 Definitions

Routes of travel included roads, ways, trails, and accessible desert washes. Route designation definitions for “open”, “closed”, and “limited” routes were established in the CDCA Plan. The definitions are shown here to help the reader.

Open Route. Access on route by motorized vehicles is allowed. Specific uses with potential for resource damage or significant conflict with other use may require specific authorization.

Closed Route. Access on route by motorized vehicles is prohibited except for: (1) fire, military, emergency or law enforcement vehicles when used for emergency purposes; (2) combat or combat support vehicles when used for national defense purposes; (3) vehicles whose use is expressly authorized by an agency head under a permit, lease, or contract; and (4) vehicles used for official purposes by employees, agents, or designated representatives of the federal government or one of its contractors. Use must be consistent with the multiple use guidelines for that area.

Limited Route. Access on a route by motor vehicles may be limited to use in one or more of the following ways and limited with respect to:

- number of vehicles allowed
- types of vehicles allowed
- time or season of vehicle use
- permitted or licensed vehicle use only
- establishment of speed limits

2.1.2 Casual versus Authorized Use

Casual use of public and national park lands in the context of motorized-vehicle access is defined as the use of routes not requiring a specific authorization. Authorized use is the use of routes approved through a permitting process for specific activities (e.g., rights-of-way issued for development of communication sites, or circumstances of environmental sensitivity or organized events requiring a recreation permit). The designation of routes as “open”, “limited”, and “closed” is generally applicable to both casual and authorized users of public lands. Where there is a requirement for occasional access associated with an authorized use and it is determined that unlimited casual use may cause undesirable resource impacts, routes would be designated “closed” and available for use only by the authorized party. In such circumstances, the authorized use of a “closed” route usually limits this use in some manner or requires mitigation in some form. Only a few routes would be in this group of “for use only by authorized parties”. Access for the use and enjoyment of private lands would be addressed on a case-by-case basis where private landowners are adversely affected by route designation decisions and upon the occasion of receiving an application for right of access.

2.1.3 Access Rights and Mineral Development

The decisions will not affect any right of access that may be determined to exist to private lands, including any Revised Statute 2477 right-of-way. As noted above such access rights and specific requests for access would involve separate and independent analyses and decisions. A resource management plan or plan amendment decision also does not affect current or future opportunity for any party to assert a claim for right of access under R.S. 2477. Therefore, the array of alternatives does not address general or specific rights of access over federal lands. However, it is intended that this document would address an anticipated general level of vehicle access to private land so that it could satisfy the requirement for NEPA analysis for any such requests in the future. This plan amendment and EA also does not address the existence of right of access under RS 2477 or the case that may exist for such right as may be brought forward by any entity or party.

A decision on this Plan Amendment will also not alter such mineral rights or the intent of Congress regarding access and other rights and mineral development. In addition, this EA would not satisfy NEPA compliance requirements for access associated with a mining plan of operation or other large-scale operation involving the use of specialized commercial or industrial equipment, road reconstruction, etc.

2.2 General Scope of Route Designation

Some roads and routes crossing public lands are considered to be part of the primary transportation system of the planning area and will not be addressed in the route designation process. This includes federal, state, and county paved and maintained roads. These roads and routes will be shown on the route designation maps to give an overall view of the transportation network. Major linear rights-of-way or similar authorizations are included in the route designations to indicate where they may also provide casual access to the public, and likewise, where routes may be designated as “limited” to rights-of-way holders to access facilities. In addition, route designations apply only to routes and portions thereof on BLM-managed public lands. The designation of routes as “open,” “limited,” and “closed” is not applicable on private lands. Access for the use and enjoyment of private lands will be addressed on a case-by-case basis where private landowners may be adversely affected by route designation decisions, as needed. Easements across private lands will be pursued for routes that are included in the route

network, as needed. Washes as motorized-vehicle routes of travel are addressed in the same manner as non-wash routes, that is, they are designated “open”, “limited”, or “closed”.

The Record of Decision (2002b) for the Approved NEMO Plan Amendment to the CDCA Plan designated routes of travel in Desert Tortoise Bioregions, including the newly designated Desert Wildlife Management Areas (DWMA). This current Plan Amendment would designate routes of travel in remaining areas outside of DWMA. Surprise Canyon Road and Furnace Creek Road will be analyzed and designated in separate planning efforts.

Table 2-1 presents a breakdown of the 3,039 total miles of routes of travel in the Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Area (NEMO) for lands managed by BLM including county and private roads. This total includes 419 miles of county road, 184 miles of private roads and 749 miles of roads previously designated in Desert Tortoise habitat by the NEMO Plan (2002b). In this planning effort, 1,519 miles of routes are evaluated in the No Action Alternative. The other Alternatives include route designations on this 1,519 miles of routes and an additional 168 miles of routes identified that were not part of the 1985-1987 route designations.

Table 2-1. Routes of Travel Network on Public Lands Managed by BLM in the NEMO Area

Route Type	Miles
County Road	419
Private Road	184
BLM Managed Lands	
Public Lands	1,519
Previously Designated in Desert Tortoise Habitat	749
Routes not Designated in 1985-1987	168
Total	3,039

2.3 Designing the Alternatives

The alternatives below provide decision makers with a range of realistic and distinct options to fulfill the purpose and need and alternative visions expressed in Chapter 1. Alternatives were developed based on:

- public scoping of issues identified in Chapter 1,
- a collaborative process involving major stakeholder agencies and the BLM Desert Advisory Council, and
- routes of travel designation regulations 43 CFR 8342.1 and Executive Orders 11644 and 11989
- the specific changing conditions that have arisen since the last route designation process

Designations for each alternative were developed through a two step process. The first step for the No Action Alternative was the original designation, if determined, for a route. For all other alternatives the first step was the processing of a route through the 43 CFR 8342.1 criteria. If as a result of that first step, a clear designation was made, it would go through the second step to provide a rationale only. If no clear decision was made on the basis of the first phase, each alternative sent the routes through the second phase to determine route decisions. For the No Action Alternative, the second phase is inclusion of later decisions, as described below under the alternative description. For other alternatives, decision trees are utilized (See Appendix A).

Following describes formulation of four alternatives: **No Action, Enhanced Recreation Opportunities and Access, Enhanced Resource Protection**, and the **Proposed Action**. A discussion of aspects that are common to all alternatives is described first. These descriptions highlight differences and similarities.

2.3.1 Common to all Action Alternatives

Designation of motorized vehicle access on routes or into areas in general is a requirement of Executive Orders 11644 and 11989, and such designation requires compliance with other laws and regulations for management of off-road vehicle use on federal lands. The regulatory guidance for vehicle route designation on public land managed by the Bureau is contained in 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 8342.1 (See Chapter 1.6 D for the four criteria). The legal and regulatory requirements for vehicle route designation are reflected in the CDCA Plan.

Four criteria are identified in 43 CFR 8342.1 to consider when making area and route-specific designation decisions, including:

- a) Areas and trails shall be located in a manner to minimize impacts to physical resources (soils, watershed, vegetation, air, and other resources) and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;
- b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats;
- c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses;
- d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas, and shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which established.

Two Congressional actions have modified the planning area boundaries for routes of travel designations. The 1994 California Desert Protection Act (CDPA) and the Fort Irwin National Training Center Expansion have excluded large areas of the Northern and Eastern Mojave planning area that previously included portions of the casual use network. Taken together, the BLM-managed routes of travel network under review has been decreased from over 2.3 million acres to under 1.3 million acres. None of this area is anticipated to be available for casual motorized public use (see cumulative impacts analysis at the end of Chapter 4 for further discussion).

The alternatives will be described in this section and analyzed in Chapter 4 in the following order:

- 1. Proposed Action (PA)
- 2. Enhanced Recreation Opportunities and Access (EROA)
- 3. Enhanced Environmental Protection (ERP)
- 4. No Action (NA)

2.3.2 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action uses criteria of both the Enhanced Recreation Opportunities and Access (EROA) and Enhanced Resource Protection (ERP) Alternatives. The Proposed action resolves conflicts that arise through application of the criteria through a decision tree approach using questions and answers to those questions. Various questions are asked, depending on the conflicts identified for each route. This decision tree approach is explained in Appendix A. Five starting questions are utilized, depending on where routes are located and what validated conflicts may exist. These five questions pertain to: 1) Private land access; 2) threatened and endangered species, listed or eligible properties on the National Register of Historic Places, and ACEC values; 3) regional access; 4) other sensitive resource values; and 5) (If no conflicts, start here...) recreational opportunities and network connectivity. This information is integrated to provide information for BLM decision-makers to use to determine which routes should be open, closed or limited in the Proposed Action.

BLM recognizes specific access requirements granted through formal authorization processes, such as rights-of-way, and the value of a motorized recreation-touring network. BLM also recognizes that the requirements of both generally are reflected in the existence of current roads, whether paved and/or maintained dirt. This alternative analyzes the road network including evaluations of adjacent jurisdictions, access to private lands, access for various types of recreation, ACEC considerations, and route redundancy and associated indirect impacts, depending upon location and offsetting route values.

Additional biological parameters to minimize harassment of wildlife and significant disruption of wildlife habitats are included in this alternative and are listed under the Enhanced Resources Protection Alternative. The Proposed Action also includes careful consideration of closing washes, based on whether they provide major through access in an area, access a major recreational site, and based on current and projected future use levels and associated impacts to sensitive areas; and careful consideration of habitat fragment size, based on current and projected future use levels and associated impacts to sensitive areas. This alternative also considered opening routes in washes where there was a need for access that was not being provided for by other routes. This alternative has a goal of no net increases of miles of open wash routes in the planning area.

The network of open and limited routes available for use by motorized vehicle is shown on Map 2-1. Routes of travel that would be closed are also shown on Map 2-1. There are a total of 1,527 miles (90.5%) of open routes, which includes 143 miles of new routes not designated in 1985 or 1987. There is an additional 32 miles (2%) of limited routes in this alternative. This alternative results in closure of 128 miles of routes (7.5%). Appendix A lists each route of travel, and indicates its status as open, closed or limited and rationale for limiting or closing the route of travel.

2.3.3 Enhanced Recreational Opportunities and Access Alternative

In addition to the application of 43 CFR 8342.1 criteria for all action alternatives, this alternative emphasizes road network analysis to ensure vehicle access to areas of casual user interest including various forms of recreation such as rock-hounding, bird watching, trail riding, extreme 4-wheel driving, horseback riding, camping, backpacking, mountain-bike riding, hunting, wildlife observation, scenic vistas, etc.. Inyo, Mono and San Bernardino County recreation plans were an important consideration in this route designation process. Road network analysis included evaluations of adjacent jurisdictions, access to private lands, recreation access, ACEC considerations, and route redundancy.

The network of open and limited routes available for use by motorized vehicle is shown on Map 2-2. Routes of travel that would be closed are also shown on Map 2-2. There are a total of 1,661 miles (98.5%) of open routes, which includes 164 miles of the new routes not designated in 1985 or 1987, and 9 miles (<1%) of limited routes in this alternative. This alternative would close 17 miles of routes (1%). Appendix A lists each route of travel, and indicates its status as open, closed or limited.

2.3.4 Enhanced Environmental Protection Alternative

The Enhanced Environmental Protection alternative tended to close routes or provide limited access on more routes which are identified as having conflicts or potential conflicts between uses and sensitive resources. In addition to the application of 43 CFR 8342.1 criteria for all alternatives, this alternative included the following criteria:

- 1 Strongly consider closure or seasonal limitations for routes within ¼ mile of significant (e.g., maternal; listed species) bat roosts, as feasible.
- 2 Strongly consider closure or reroute of routes within ¼ mile of prairie falcon and golden eagle aeries (i.e., cliff nests).
- 3 Strongly consider closure, reroute, and/or conversion to hiking trail for routes within ¼ mile of significant natural and or artificial water source (e.g. springs, seeps, streams, guzzlers).
- 4 All motorized trails are closed in designated wilderness.
- 5 Motorized routes designated open or limited in natural areas (e.g., Areas for Critical Environmental Concern) must not adversely affect natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which the areas were established.
- 6 Consider closing or seasonally limiting washes, including navigable washes, in sensitive areas (e.g., special areas). Consider opening navigable washes outside of special areas.
- 7 Strongly consider closure, seasonal limitation, or upgrade for routes with significant erosion and degradation potential.
- 8 Strongly consider closure or reroute of routes within ¼ mile of a significant sacred site or cultural resource that may be impacted or lost.
- 9 Additional criteria for special areas (ACEC) to protect site-specific resources therein including:
 - a. Strongly consider closure of routes with potential impact to federally listed plants;
 - b. Two routes (6 miles) that were closed under the NEMO Plan (2002b) to protect Amargosa niterwort populations would remain closed;
 - c. Strongly consider not identifying any new motorized routes as open within ¼ mile of the high water mark of the Amargosa River; and
 - d. Strongly consider closure of routes impacted by federally listed Amargosa vole.

This alternative would also close routes that BLM found to be non-existent or intermittently visible, i.e., those where vehicle use would require the crushing of substantial vegetation, or those no longer used and substantially reclaimed by natural forces, even if such routes are shown on authoritative maps (e.g., the most recent USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle maps), unless they are regional network routes or provide unique recreational values.

The network of open and limited routes available for use by motorized vehicle is shown on Map 2-3. The primary and secondary access routes are also identified. Routes of Travel that would be closed are also shown on Map 2-3. There is a total of 1,485 miles (88.0%) of open routes, which includes 135 miles of the new routes not designated in 1985 or 1987, and 28 miles (1.7%) of limited routes in this alternative. This alternative would close 174 miles of routes (10.3%). Appendix A lists each route of travel, and indicates its status as open, closed or limited.

2.3.5 No Action Alternative

This alternative continues current management and defines the management and environmental affects baseline to compare with the other alternatives. The previous route designations (in 1985 and 1987) would continue without change except as previously modified by the CDCA Plan Amendments, (e.g., NEMO 2002b) within the planning area. The NEMO Plan (BLM 2002a) updated the CDCA Plan for three routes that were previously closed by Federal Register Notice in Carson Slough for protection of Amargosa niterwort, consistent with 43 CFR 8342.1.

The existing designated route network, as shown on Map 2-4, would remain for the No Action Alternative. There are 1,509 miles of open routes in the designated route network in the No Action Alternative and 10 miles of routes that have already been closed since the 1985-1987 route designations. None of the 168 miles of newly identified routes are in the No Action alternative, although some of these routes may be designated open at some future time. Therefore, the total network is 89.4% of the existing route inventory designated in the other alternatives. As such, this alternative does not fully meet the purpose and need outlined in the first paragraph of Chapter 1.

2.3.6 Comparison of Alternatives

Table 2-2 presents a summary comparison of the mileage of Open, Closed and Limited routes for the four alternatives considered in the present planning effort.

Table 2-2. Miles of Open, Limited and Closed Routes by Alternative for the Present Planning Effort

Route Designation	Alternative			
	Proposed Action	Enhanced Recreation Opportunities & Access	Enhanced Resource Protection	No Action
Total Open	1,527	1,661	1,485	1,509
New Design. Open Routes included in above	143	164	135	case-by-case
Limited	32	9	28	0
Closed	128	17	174	10
Total	1,687	1,687	1,687	1,519

2.4 Implementation of Route Designation Decisions

- Routes comprising the access network within the NEMO Routes planning area would be individually signed to signify their availability for use. Signing strategies may vary to reflect site-specific needs.
- Information kiosks depicting the basic recreational access network would be installed at key locations throughout the NEMO Routes planning area. These kiosks would furnish information relating to access opportunities and limitations, resource protection, and visitor safety.
- Maps, brochures, etc. depicting the basic recreational access network would be developed and distributed to the public. Information would be similar to that on the kiosks, but would be more comprehensive as space allows.
- Certain segments of the open route network would be nominated for inclusion by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division (OHMVRD) as part of the California Back Country Discovery Trail (CBDT), an element of the California Statewide Motorized Trail System. The CBDT is a system of existing motorized routes that when formally designated would offer long distinct backcountry touring opportunities from Mexico to Oregon and throughout the state of California. Utilizing an OHVMRD grant, the BLM California Desert District commissioned a study that identified a proposed system of routes for inclusion as part of the CBDT. That proposed system of routes would be included as a component of the CDCA Plan through additional signing and brochures after the public has had an opportunity to review the proposed CBDT maps at local BLM offices and provide feedback. Currently, the NEMO Planning area includes portions of four of the seven proposed California Back Country Discovery Trail (CBDT) routes. These are CBDT Routes 5, 6, 7, and 9. Together they offer a comprehensive look at the California Desert, its resources and its history.
- Routes designated “closed” within desert tortoise route sub-regions would be appropriately signed, barricaded, or rehabilitated to exclude access, and allow recovery, except where limited use is needed to achieve management objectives (e.g., maintenance of small game guzzlers to support wildlife populations). In such cases, access would be controlled to exclude casual use by the general public, yet allow administrative use. In other sub-regions, closure strategies would be appropriate to specific area goals and would be addressed at the time of specific route designations, by sub-region.

2.5 Summary of Impacts of Alternatives

Table 2-3 summarizes the impacts of the alternatives considered.

Table 2-3. Summary of Impacts by Alternative

Resource	Alternative			
	1. Proposed Action	2. Enhance Recreation Opportunities and Access	3. Enhanced Resources Protection	4. No Action
Air Quality	Result in reduction of PM ₁₀ emissions over time as 129 miles of closed routes are rehabilitated.	Result in slight reduction in PM ₁₀ emissions over time as 17 miles of closed routes are rehabilitated.	Result in reduction in PM ₁₀ emissions over time as 175 miles of closed routes are rehabilitated.	Result in slight reduction in PM ₁₀ emissions over time as 10 miles of closed routes are rehabilitated
Vegetation	Slight increase (178 acres) in vegetation biomass for region as routes are rehabilitated	Minimal Change	Slight increase (255 acres) in vegetation biomass for region as routes are rehabilitated	No change
Noxious Weeds	Reduce introduction and spread of noxious weeds on closed routes and surrounding area	Minimal Change	Similar to Alternative 1	No change
Riparian and Wetland Vegetation	Little adverse impact to riparian and wetland vegetation. Closure of routes in vicinity of Denning Spring, Badwater and Amargosa River. Limited route on Valley View allotment.	Moderate impact to riparian and wetland vegetation	Similar to Alternative 1 with additional closures at Mexican Spring and Carson Slough (benefiting habitat for Amargosa niterwort)	Similar to Alternative 2
Wash Vegetation	Closure of a few sensitive wash routes, some impact to wash vegetation	Moderate impact to wash vegetation	Closure of most wash routes reduces impact to vegetation and minimizes introduction of invasive plant species	Similar to Alternative 2
Wildlife	Wildlife would benefit from the closure of routes that impact wildlife behavior (i.e. feeding, breeding, nesting, watering sites, migration corridors)	Potential for habitat fragmentation if routes have moderate to high use	Similar to Alternative 1	Similar to Alternative 2
Amargosa Vole	No routes in Amargosa vole habitat	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1

Resource	Alternative			
	1. Proposed Action	2. Enhance Recreation Opportunities and Access	3. Enhanced Resources Protection	4. No Action
Least Bell's Vireo	Potential benefit from reduced human disturbance and therefore increased likelihood of future nesting	No open routes in Amargosa ACEC forage area for Least Bell's Vireo	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 2
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	Level of disturbance below threshold to effect nesting	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1
Inyo California Towhee	No routes in habitat (springs) in the Argus Range. Some routes leading to springs are barricaded	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1
Desert Tortoise	Action area is in low-density desert tortoise habitat (Category III). Previous NEMO Plan (2002b) designated routes in Category I and II habitat. Route closures provide some benefit to desert tortoise habitat.	Action area is in low-density desert tortoise habitat (Category III). Previous NEMO (2002b) designated routes in Category I and II habitat. Increased potential for adverse impacts due to modification of habitat	Similar as Alternative 1 with more route closures	Similar as Alternative 2, but fewer route closures
Black toad	No routes cross the wetland area around Deep Springs Lake where black toads have been observed. Open routes traverse riparian habitat (near Antelope Spring) which may be habitat for Black Toad	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1
Swainson's Hawk	Two nesting pairs near Fish Valley Lake. Route F0036 closure decreases human disturbance in the nest vicinity and benefits Swainson's Hawk.	Route F0036 to remain open	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 2

Resource	Alternative			
	1. Proposed Action	2. Enhance Recreation Opportunities and Access	3. Enhanced Resources Protection	4. No Action
Bats and Myotis	Routes to active mines and claims remain open and maternity roosts to be mitigated with bat grates across mine openings.	Same as Alternative 1	Closure of a few routes in Silurian Hills, an area of high concentration of bat maternity roosts since evaluation of mine adits will not precede designations.	Same as Alternative 1
Bighorn Sheep	Pleasant Canyon route in Panamint Mountains to remain open for access to Death Valley National Park	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1, except for closure of Kingston Wash in Bighorn Sheep habitat	Same as Alternative 1
Western Burrowing Owl	Western burrowing owls in Panamint and Fish Lake Valleys have tolerated the current levels of occasional vehicle access for many years.	Same as Alternative 1	Closure of Route F0036 in Fish Lake Valley enhances protection of Western burrowing owls	Same as Alternative 1
Le Conte's Thrasher	Panamint Mountain range may be habitat for Le Conte's thrasher. No change in route designation in this area	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1
Mojave Fringe-toed Lizard	Close a portion of Route D1612 near the lizard's habitat at Dumont Dunes	Same as Alternative 1, also due to route instability	Same as Alternative 1	No action to close Route D1612
Cultural Resources	Closure of routes would enhance the preservation of cultural resources along these routes	No substantial change from existing conditions	Similar to Alternative 1 with more route closures	Minimal Route Closure
Soils	Soil impacts would be decreased on 3 routes closed due to erosion potential and re-vegetation would eventually improve soil stability on all closed routes.	No substantial change from existing conditions	The same as Alternative 1, with greater decreases in soil erosion due to increased closures.	Minimal Route Closure

Resource	Alternative			
	1. Proposed Action	2. Enhance Recreation Opportunities and Access	3. Enhanced Resources Protection	4. No Action
Water	Locally moderate impacts to Amargosa River and Salt Creek	Moderate impacts to Amargosa River and Salt Creek	Low impacts to Amargosa River and Salt Creek	Same as Alternative 2
Watershed	Low impact on Eureka-Saline Valleys, Upper Amargosa, Ivanpah – Pahrump Valleys and Death Valley – Central and Lower Amargosa watersheds	Slightly higher impact on these watersheds and higher impact on Upper Amargosa	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 2
Lands and Reality	No Impact	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1
Livestock grazing	No Impact	Same as Alternative 1	Closure of duplicate routes that access springs	Same as Alternative 1
Minerals	No substantial direct or indirect impacts to access to minerals or mineral development	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1
Prospecting and Staking Claims	Route closures make prospecting in affected areas less likely.	No Impact	Similar to Alternative 1, but with more route closures	Same as Alternative 2
Nonrenewable Energy	No substantial impacts to oil and gas, geothermal, or uranium/thorium development	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1	Same as Alternative 1
Recreation	A variety of areas and types of routes are available to meet the needs of recreational users. 129 miles of routes are closed or limited.	Closes or limits 17 miles of routes with minimal impact on recreation use.	Closes or limits 175 miles of routes leaving 1,486 miles of routes available for recreation access	Closes less than 10 miles of routes with minimal impact on recreation use.
Vehicle Access	The route network meets the public motor vehicle access, touring and transportation needs; 1,528 miles of open routes available for use.	Enhanced access with a total of 1,663 miles of open available for use.	Provides for 1,486 miles of open routes, but further limits network access in a few areas.	Provides access on 1,511 miles of open routes

Resource	Alternative			
	1. Proposed Action	2. Enhance Recreation Opportunities and Access	3. Enhanced Resources Protection	4. No Action
ACEC	Enhance the conservation of resources within the Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) by closing routes through Carson Slough, Denning Spring and some routes in Upper Amargosa	Designates 2 routes open in Amargosa niterwort habitat. The impacts of casual use of the routes in Carson Slough are minor. One is an existing route that is seldom used and does not connect to the network. The other is primarily used by a mining company and does provide a connector to the network and to Nevada. Some potential for introduction of invasive species exists from the casual use of these routes.	Closure of Routes to Carson Slough ACEC, Willow Wash, Denning Spring and several closures in Upper Amargosa protect ACEC from direct and indirect impacts associated with open routes.	One route is open in Amargosa niterwort habitat. The impacts of casual use of the routes in Carson Slough are minor. The route is already permitted for use by a mining company provides a connector both to Stateline Road and to Nevada. Some potential for introduction of invasive species exists from the casual use of these routes.
California Back Country Discovery Trail	The routes for the CA Backcountry Discovery Trail or alternative CBDT routes are designated open and available to maintain the continuity of the backcountry touring system for portions of 4 trails in the planning area.	Same as Alternative 1	Most of the routes for the CA Backcountry Discovery Trail or alternative CBDT routes are designated open and available to maintain the continuity of the backcountry touring system for portions of 4 trails in the planning area.	Same as Alternative 1
Wild and Scenic Rivers	One route adjacent to Sperry Wash would be closed and result in minor watershed benefits to the Amargosa River. The little used Cottonwood creek 4-wheel drive route would remain open.	Same as Alternative 1	Similar to Alternative 1, except for closure of Cottonwood wash	No route closure adjacent to Sperry Wash with minimal impact to Amargosa Wild and Scenic River Segment

Resource	Alternative			
	1. Proposed Action	2. Enhance Recreation Opportunities and Access	3. Enhanced Resources Protection	4. No Action
Socio-economics	Meets the need of access to the Northern and Eastern Mojave by residents and visitors for transportation, work, visiting, and recreation for the reasonably foreseeable future. Small increases in the cost of doing business in some more remote areas.	Similar to Alternative 1, but the cost of doing business is reduced in some areas	Similar to Alternative 1, but the cost of doing business is increased in some areas	No change from present conditions

